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DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM
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SUBJECT: Preparing U.S. Military Ag Programs for Civilian
Transition

¶1. (U) Summary: At a CENTCOM-initiated and sponsored January 29-31 workshop, military and civilian representatives developed a plan for transitioning assistance from Agribusiness Development Teams (ADT) to civilian expertise over the next several years. Stakeholders from the Embassy, United States Forces - Afghanistan (USFOR-A), International Security Assistance Force Afghanistan (ISAF), ISAF Joint Command (IJC), Regional Command East (RC-E), and National Guard Bureau headquarters also identified actions to address challenges in the current civ-mil environment, while maintaining continuity and unity of effort, in areas where ADTs operate. Next steps include providing guidance on the roles and responsibilities of ADTs and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to civilian and military leadership, publishing standardized "best practices," identifying agricultural requirements for those provinces served by ADTs, and sharing that information with USG counterparts. End Summary.

Background

¶2. (SBU) ADTs in Afghanistan are currently sourced by the Army and Air National Guard, which combine agriculture expertise (from civilian experience or acquired via focused pre-deployment training) with mobility and force protection. There will be nine National Guard-sourced ADTs in FY10: 8 in the RC-East and 1 in RC-South. The ADT presence, which began in 2007, will decrease to a four teams in 2012 and beyond. Agribusiness development assistance at the sub-national level includes: advising Directors of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL) at the provincial level; advising extension agents; extending the reach of DAILs and extension agents; providing training and education to DAILs, extension workers and farmers; and providing extended information operations in their areas of operation (AO) as well as in the U.S. ADTs have their own security forces (SECFOR) and access to Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds independent of PRTs -- resources dedicated to the agricultural sector. ADTs have experienced fewer targeted attacks, reportedly due to their positive image among Afghans, but with their dedicated SECFOR probably also playing a role.

Taking Action to Ensure Unity of Effort

¶3. (U) The workshop outlined several areas that need to be addressed in the near term in order to lay the groundwork for a transition in ADT roles and responsibilities. Key issues identified include: civilian-military organizational challenges; lack of civilian agricultural resources in the ADT AO; and unclear military leadership over who has responsibility for the agricultural sector when a PRT and ADT have the same area of operation -- all factors that hinder civ-mil unity of effort.

¶4. (U) Attendees agreed that civ-mil teams must work together to ensure better allocation, coordination, and synchronization of resources during the transition from military to civilian agricultural expertise. IJC agreed to prepare a military

fragmentary order (FRAGO) that will task the Regional Commands to re-assess and better delineate the roles and responsibilities between ADTs and PRTs. USFOR-A will develop a Request for Forces (RFF) that considers the best force tailored to future agricultural requirements. The Embassy Interagency Provincial Affairs Office will work with IJC to define provincial expertise requirements as each ADT prepares to transition from military to civilian expertise. It will be critical for civilian agriculture experts to have their own funding sources at the lowest operational levels in order to sustain activities previously utilizing CERP funds.

15. (U) Workshop participants also identified Afghan government leadership and mid- to long-term USG and other donor support as critical factors for developing Afghan agricultural capacity. Participants agreed on the importance of creating incentives for the sector to become independent. They agreed to develop mid- to long-term resource planning, following the start of U.S. military level drawdown in the second half of 2011. Much of this planning is already underway by the Kabul-based Embassy Agriculture Team, in support of the USG Agriculture Assistance Strategy for Afghanistan, and will be discussed with the various civ-mil elements outside of Kabul to determine specific needs and how they can be addressed by future agriculture assistance.

Comment

16. (U) Transition will require PRTs to be resourced appropriately to take on responsibilities heretofore funded by the ADTs. These resources will need to include additional civilians with agricultural expertise, force protection for activities originating from PRTs, and funding able to be disbursed at the most local levels

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to replace previous CERP resources.

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